

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~A header and permeate collection means~~An apparatus incorporating potted hollow fibre membranes, the ~~header and permeate collection means~~apparatus having,

- a) a solid mass of a potting material having a first face;
- b) a plurality of hollow fibre membranes sealed in the potting material; and,
- c) terminal portions of the hollow fibre membranes adjacent open ends of the membranes protruding from the first face,
wherein,
- d) the solid mass of potting material extends to and adhesively secures to the inner periphery of a permeate collection means to form a permeate collection zone; and,
- e) the open-ended terminal portions of the hollow fibre membranes protrude into the permeate collection zone.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 1 wherein the permeate collection means is a permeate pan or an end cap.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 1 having a cushioning lamina embedding said fibres and coextensively adhered to said potting material.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~The header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 3 wherein said cushioning lamina has a hardness in the range from Shore A 30 to Shore D 45.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 1 wherein the permeate collection means further comprises walls enclosing a plenum adjacent to the permeate collection zone into which plenum a gas may be introduced.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 5 further comprising an air tube passing through the potting material, the air tube having a first end protruding from a second face of the potting material from which the membranes extend and a second end in communication with the plenum.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 6 wherein the potting material extends to and adhesively secures to the air tube.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 1 further comprising an air tube, the air tube passing through the potting material, the air tube having a first end protruding from a second face of the potting material from which the membranes extend and a second end in communication with a plenum or manifold into which air may be introduced.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~header and permeate collection means~~apparatus of claim 8 wherein the potting material extends to and adhesively secures to the air tube.